drilled garrison for the forts and lines of Washington was almost wholly neglected. Yet no one in the army was better qualified than McClellan to put Washington in a state of perfect readiness for any emergency. He unquestionably possessed the requisite skill and technical knowledge. Why then did he not do it,—or seriously attempt to do it ? Partly because he thought, or rather chose to think, that it wan extremely improbable that works as formidable in appearance as were those which surrounded Washington would ever be attacked, and that therefore, any sort of a garrison for them would suffice, but principally because he believed that the safety of Washington would be assured beyond serious question by the operations against Richmond which he proponed to conduct in person at the head of as large a force an he could possibly muster, and that, therefore, the mow men he could take with him and the fewer ho left behind, the more likely he would be to succeed, and the more " secure " would Washington be.

Had General McClellan been President of the United States he could have carried out these views with perfect propriety. But he was only a major-general ia the army, and the orders under which ho was now acting proceeded upon a wholly different

theory from that which he himself entertained on this subject. His instructions, contained in the order of March 8th,[1] were to leave in and about Washing
ton such a force as in his own opinion and that of the corps-commanders would leave the city entirely se-
cure. This was reiterated in the order of March 13.

[1] *Anfe*, 234.